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ABSTRACT

An examination of China's policy, "making the ancient serve the present and foreign things serve China," introduced by Mao Ze-dong, is intended to provoke further discussion of the ideological dimension of foreign language education (FLE) in China. Some observers suggest that this has been an important guiding doctrine in FLE since 1949, both overtly and as an underlying ideology. Development of this policy is placed in historical perspective, and the policy's impact on FLE and on people's attitudes toward foreign language expertise and foreign technology are represented through documented facts and examples. Implications of the policy in FLE are then explored by examining the country's most influential foreign language course, college English, focusing on its syllabus, materials writing, and teaching methods. Finally, how the policy will be implemented further is discussed by examining some "quasi-official" documents, a term coined to refer to commercial publications authored by or bearing names of senior government officials. Contains 39 references. (MSE)

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A Canon, a Norm and an Attitude

— Ideological dimension in foreign language education in China

(Anwei Feng)

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Introduction

Many education researchers agree that China's educational pendulum has, in the last five decades, swung between ideological models for political control and transformed ones for economic development (Chen 1981 and Ross 1993). The swings have apparently reflected the dynamics of politics and the socio-economic situation of the country. The political environment and economic situation have been even more determining factors in foreign language education in China. Hence, some education researchers, understandably, represent foreign language education as a 'thermometer' or 'a barometer' of the country's effort for modernization, indicating the extent to which foreign influences are tolerated (Gui 1990 and Ross 1992). Most education researchers clearly understand the dynamic nature of foreign language education in China. Yet, not so many are aware that the inherited assumption embodied in the slogan — Making foreign things serve China (*Yangwei zhongyong*) — which suggests that foreign expertise and foreign language proficiency are valuable only for utilitarian reasons has in fact provided a strong thread of continuity in foreign language education. Even fewer have realized the implications of this assumption in foreign language education beyond this level of awareness.

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* This is a slightly revised version of a paper entitled "Thread of Continuity in EFL education" which was presented at the Seattle TESOL Conference in March 1998.

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Yangwei zhongyong is the second half of the well-known *Shuangyong* policy, which is the abbreviated form of the dualism — Making the ancient serve the present and foreign things serve China (*Guwei jinyong, yangwei zhongyong*). The *Shuangyong* policy was developed by Mao Ze-dong, former paramount leader of China before Deng Xiao-ping. It was primarily based on the ideas put forward by Self-Strengtheners represented by Zhang Zhidong (1837-1909) after the Opium War (cf. Ayers 1971). In his *Exhortation to Study* (*Quan xue pian*) published in installment in 1898 and 1899 Zhang made known his *Tiyong* dichotomy that traditional Chinese learning for fundamental principles (*ti*) and Western civilization for practical applications (*yong*). Educational researchers, such as Ross (1993) and Zhang (1993) agree that, though applied in bizarre ways from time to time, the *Shuangyong* policy has been one of the most important guiding doctrines in education and has played a guardian's role in foreign language education in China since 1949. Unlike other ideologically-oriented aphorisms or dualisms in education which are gradually losing their appeal, this policy has been continuously viewed as the principal ideology of the education system and frequently referred to, often subconsciously by Chinese education researchers, especially foreign language educators, as an ideological support for their arguments. Much evidence shows that the policy has been an ideological concept long- and deeply-embedded in the Chinese culture, which can be the very reason why the policy, particularly its applications and implications in contemporary foreign language education in China, has not received adequate discussion from education researchers.

This paper attempts to provoke further discussions about the ideological dimension of foreign language education in China. It will first look into the development of this policy in a historical perspective. The impact of this policy on foreign language education and on people's attitude towards foreign language expertise and foreign technology will be represented through documented figures, facts and examples. The paper will then explore the implications of the policy in foreign language education by examining the country's most influential foreign language course, College English, with a focus on its syllabus, materials writing and teaching methodology. Finally, the paper will show how the policy

will be further implemented by reviewing some representative 'quasi-official' documents, a term coined here to refer to commercial publications authored by or bearing names of senior government officials.

The "*Shuangyong* policy" from a historical perspective

Since perhaps the very beginning of diplomatic relationships with Western countries Chinese statesmen and educationists have had strong consciousness of the political and social risks of introducing Western socio-economic and education systems. The earliest insurgency against Western influence was probably the prohibition of Western missionary practice. As early as the seventeenth century when the Jesuits were permitted to enter China they were allowed to put their scientific and technical expertise at the service of the Emperor. Their knowledge in scientific domains was respected but their religious doctrines were totally rejected (Bastid 1987). These early Jesuits, having no access to the diverse currents of Chinese thoughts and being banned by the imperial court to carry out missionary work, failed to achieve their original aim of evangelism. As most Jesuits had posts within the court, they gradually became part of the elite in the Chinese society. Some of them, however, were arrested and eventually expelled for spying in name but for their religious attempts in reality (ibid.). As very few statesmen and literati had ever doubted the supremacy of Confucianism[1] up until the mid-nineteenth century, neither the education system nor religions practiced in China had undergone considerable change. On the contrary, when the Jesuits returned to their home countries, their 'objective descriptions' about China in fact "served to create a Chinese utopia on which those who questioned their own age and searched for new points of reference could draw" (Llasera 1987, p.32). Apparently, in this early period of diplomatic relationship with the Western countries, the Western influence on Chinese culture was not very significant.

The Opium War in the early 1840s and the subsequent wars between China and the Western powers devastated China and shattered the country's tightly-closed door to the Western countries. As a result of the increasing contact with the Western countries after the wars and the Self-strengthening Movement[2], Chinese education, particularly foreign language education developed at a speedy pace with the establishment of many foreign language institutions and military-technical schools in many major cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong and Wuhan (cf. Mao and Shen 1988 and Wang and Yian 1994). As the schools and the movement posed an obvious threat to the two-millennium-old Confucian teachings the attacks from Confucian scholars became increasingly malignant in the second half of the nineteenth century. The attacks were most evident after China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 which literally crushed the Self-Strengtheners' efforts for nearly half a century. In 1898 Zhang Zhidong (1837-1909), governor general of the Hubei and Hunan region, published his famous *Exhortation to Study* (*Quan xue pian*). His book consists of the *Internal Book* (*Nei pian*) with nine chapters which details ways to educate people to follow the Way of Confucius and Mencius and the *External Book* (*Wai pian*) of fifteen chapters which encourage promotion of western systems and arts and depict ways of promoting them under the premises of Confucianism. In this book, Zhang justified the aphorism of "Chinese learning for fundamental principles, Western learning for practical applications" (*zhongxue wei ti, xixue wei yong*), stating that the substance (*Ti*) of Chinese civilization (referring to the essence of Confucianism) and the practical means (*Yong*) of the West (referring to Western languages and military-technical knowledge) were two separable entities. When the Chinese *Ti* and the Western *Yong* were combined, he argued, they could serve the purpose of strengthening the country (Ross 1993). Zhang's *Ti-yong* dichotomy appeared to have struck a balance in the conflict between the reformers and the Confucian literati (cf. Ayers 1971) and it was greatly appreciated by the rulers of the late Qing dynasty as it could be used as an important theoretical basis for safeguarding the ethics of the feudal society and the traditional civil service examination system[3]. Though Zhang's *Ti-yong* dichotomy (sometimes called *Ti-yong* formula) underwent immediate fierce attacks from some leading reformers such as Yan Fu and Kang Youwei at the turn of the century (cf. Mao and Shen 1988), it was thoroughly reflected in the School Regulations formally

promulgated by the late Qing government (Abe 1987). In actual fact, since the turn of the century, despite the final abolishment of the civil service examination system in 1905, the *Ti-yong* dichotomy has had continuous impact on Chinese education in general and its foreign language education in particular.

During the early Republican era, there were attempts made by Yuan Shi-k'ai (1859-1916), first president of the Republic of China (1912-1916), to restore the civil service examination system and the *Ti-yong* approach in education and, above all, the monarchy with himself as the emperor (Li et al. 1988). His regime turned out to be short as the resistance led by Sun Yat-sen (1866-1926) and other political activists was extremely vigorous and effective. In the era of Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975) from 1927 to 1949, education policies were primarily represented by the "Eight Morals and Four Thoughts" (*Bade siwei*)[4] which were interpreted by Chiang as the essence of the "Three Principles of the People" (*Sanmin zhuyi*)[5], the dominating ideology in the Nationalist regime. The fundamental ideals of *Bade siwei*, however, were the traditional Confucian values which stressed the development in students of patriotism and loyalty to the regime (Shen 1994). Although the Nationalist government tried to make education overtly political the whole Republican period was seen by many education researchers as being characterized by considerable maturity and independence of educational ideology and practice (Cleverley 1985 and Heyhoe 1996). These researchers argue that, though severe educational dearth was evident, an attitudinal change towards modern schooling was perceptible within the Republican period. Foreign influences such as John Dewey's (1859-1952) educational philosophy and the American system of education could be seen to be integrated within the patterns that were to serve the Nationalist political goals under their regime (Brown 1987). In higher education, many influential educationists, represented by Cai Yuanpei[6], made tremendous efforts in reforming China's tertiary education. The Chinese university gradually "achieved a balance between its Chinese identity and its ability to link up to a world community of universities" (Heyhoe 1996, p. 53). Among Cai Yuanpei's many educational theories, the most influential was his "all-embracing" (*jianrong binbao*) policy which was intended to fuse the ancient with the present and the Chinese with the Foreign (Mao and Shen 1988 and Zhang et al. 1993). This policy addressed the basic

principle of academic freedom in higher education and suggested a positive attitude to traditional learning and foreign philosophy and technology. This was surely a significant development of Zhang Zhidong's *Ti-yong* approach.

Though traces of the *Shuangyong* policy could be found in Mao Zedong's earlier works (Zhang et al. 1993), the most explicit discussion about the relationships between the 'new democratic culture', the foreign culture and the ancient culture was represented by his statements made in his article — On New Democracy (written in 1940 in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* Vol. II, 1968, pp. 623-70). In this article Mao remarked that "To nourish her own culture China should assimilate a great deal of progressive foreign culture. ... we must assimilate whatever is useful to us" (p. 667, author's translation). On the same page after this statement, Mao warned against the "wholesale Westernization" by asserting that foreign cultures contain nutriment, which can be selected for absorption, as well as dross which should be discarded. He made similar remarks in the same article about absorbing the democratic essentials from traditional Chinese culture after removing the dross from it. In a few other policy documents and articles Mao made consistent statements and in 1956 he overtly advocated the slogan to learn from foreign countries especially in areas of natural science in his On ten major relationships (*Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, Vol. V, 1977, pp. 267-288). The *Shuangyong* policy finally came into being in 1964 when Mao Zedong put Making the ancient serve the present and the foreign things serve China (*Guwei junyong, yangwei zhongyong*) as an annotation on a letter written to him by some students of the Central Music Conservatory in Beijing (*Selected Letters of Mao Zedong*, 1983, the People's Press). The evidence shown in these articles and letters indicates that the paramount leader strongly believed that if appropriately treated foreign expertise and ancient cultural traditions could be made useful in socialist construction and education.

Although there are clear differences between Zhang Zhidong's *Ti-yong* formula and Mao Zedong's *Shuangyong* policy, they had at least one important belief in common, i.e. foreign expertise could be tailored for use in China. The mere survival of this assumption for over a century strongly suggests that the presupposition is deeply embedded in the

Chinese political culture. Today, the *Shuangyong* policy is regarded as an important part of Mao Zedong Thought and it is said to "reflect the deep-going philosophy of materialist dialectics of Marxism" (Zhang et al. 1993, p. 221). Mao's *Shuangyong* policy significantly influenced Chinese education during his 27 years as the paramount leader of China (see more details below). His educational policies, as well as many other political doctrines and ideals, have been inherited, at least theoretically by Deng Xiaoping and the present administration led by Jiang Zemin although some of Mao's policies and quotations in his late years have been cautiously criticized since his death in 1976.

Applications of the *Shuangyong* policy in education

Compared with Zhang Zhidong's *Ti-yong* formula, what is apparently lacking in Mao's *Shuangyong* policy is the elaboration of exactly what 'nutriments' are for absorbing and what 'dross' is for discarding. As a result, arbitrary and bizarre interpretations could be seen in the campaigns which have been launched in line with the *Shuangyong* policy in the educational front since 1949. These interpretations and campaigns reflect precisely the dynamics of Chinese politics, economic theories and foreign policy. The first example of "making foreign things serve China" (*Yangwei zhongyong*) was in fact the wholesale importation of Marxism and Leninism. This had started well before 1949. When the 'Russian Socialist Revolution in October (1917)' broke out Marxism and Leninism were soon introduced into the country and became the political canon of the communist party. Since the People's Republic was founded in 1949, the imported Marxism and Leninism and the native Mao Zedong Thought have been constitutionalised as the guiding ideology of socialist China.

In the early 1950s the country vigorously launched a campaign "to learn from the Soviet Union" as the government identified itself close with the Soviet Union model due to both political and economic reasons (cf. Price 1987 and Li 1987). The campaign significantly affected China's education system, especially the infra-structure of most Chinese tertiary institutions (Li 1987). During this period, according to Liu, Funien (cited in Li et al. 1988, p. 234), the country "indiscriminately copied the education theories imported from the Soviet Union and *Pedagigika* (written in 1956 by Kairov, I. A. (1893-1978), a Russian educationist) almost became the Bible in the educational arena" (translation by the author). In foreign language education, Russian became the absolutely dominant foreign language, and in many cases the only foreign language, taught in schools and universities (see Fu 1986 and Li et al. 1988). English teaching was practically stamped out for about six to seven years. According to an article published in *People's Education* July, 1953 (quoted in Li et al. 1988) students and teachers of English were demoralized in this situation. Most students showed no interest in learning English saying that English was useless because "the political systems and the culture(s) of British and American imperialism are not as developed as ours" (p. 332). Some teachers said disheartenedly that they were teaching "the language of decadent imperialism" (p.333). This situation mirrored precisely the political atmosphere in the early 1950s when the propaganda against American imperialism for the Korean War reached its peak and the door of the country was wide-open to the Soviet Union but tightly shut to the Western world.

In the first decade of the communist rule, even natural science subjects were arbitrarily classified by some radical ideologues into political categories. Zhang et al. (1993, p. 239) gave a few interesting examples. The pedology developed by Vilyams, V. R. (1863-1939), a Russian agronomist, was prefixed the 'socialist pedology' while the studies of mineral fertilizers in improving soil quality by German organic chemist, Liebig, J. F. von (1803-1873), was labeled the 'capitalist fertilizer science'. Likewise, genetics created by Michurin, I. V. (1855-1935) and later promoted by Lysenko, T. D. (1898-1976) was named 'socialist genetics' whereas genetics developed by Morgan, T. H. (1866 - 1945), American zoologist and geneticist, was crowned with an 'imperialist hat'. The criterion used for the bizarre classification was obvious: those branches of science developed by

Russian scientists were socialist sciences and thus worth introducing while those established in Western countries were imperialist in nature and should be rejected. The classification as such undoubtedly sounds peculiar to anyone who is not acquainted with the history of the beginning decade of communist China. However, it manifests the strong impact of the anti-rightist campaign (see below) which substantially affected the academic and technical field. An academician could be easily capped with a rightist hat, which would make him an enemy of the people, if any trace of worshipping capitalism was found in his remarks or behavior.

Starting from 1956 the 'wholesale Sovietization' policy began to shudder as the conflict between China and the Soviet Union became open and gradually intensified (cf. Li 1987). As a result, English began to resume its place as one of the major foreign languages taught in schools and tertiary institutions. However, as the country kept on launching political campaigns one after another in the second half of the 50s such as the Movement to Rectify the Working Styles of the Party Members (in 1956), followed by the Anti-Rightist Movement (in 1957) and the "Great Leap Forward" which started in 1958, the implementation of the policy of making use of foreign languages and foreign expertise became more and more politicized in China. In some official educational documents promulgated in those years 'politics and reality' were strongly emphasized and foreign language textbooks were filled mainly with texts reflecting Chinese political reality (Fu 1986).

The abandoning of the Great Leap Forward and the famine in the early 1960s seems to have cooled down the radical faction of the party. In the period that followed there was an obvious reassertion of pragmatic politics and the educational pendulum swung slightly towards the academic side (cf. Chen 1981). In foreign language education, both politics and language skills training were emphasized and the *Shuangyong* policy seemed to have entered its new stage. Fu (1986) reported that 'an important conference' organized by the Ministry of Education in 1965 came up with three clauses for teaching materials selection. Firstly, there should be an increase of revolutionary contents in formal foreign language teaching textbooks. In the mean time, both texts showing capitalist countries in

the ascendant and texts revealing the dark side of capitalism should be selected for use. Some 'negative' materials which show the social development and political systems of the target culture(s) could also be chosen as informal reading materials for the purpose of enhancing students' critical competence. Secondly, for the same reason textbooks should contain more texts of contemporary culture than classic ones. Thirdly, textbook materials should reflect the revolutionary experience and the achievement of socialist construction but, at the same time, in order to enable students to learn idiomatic language, they should also contain enough genuine information about the lifestyles, ways of thinking, national characteristics, geographic conditions, history, customs and traditions of the culture(s) of the target language. Clearly, the second stipulation addressed the relationship between the traditional culture and the contemporary culture (*Gu yu jin*) while the first and the third attempted to deal with the issue of the Chinese context in relation to the foreign context (*Zhong yu wai*). The three clauses were apparently intended to strike a kind of balance in implementing the *Shuangyong* policy. They demonstrated the determination of policy makers to apply the *Shuangyong* policy in a comprehensive manner to foreign language education.

Unfortunately, however, the clauses thus stipulated at this conference did not get a chance to be further implemented. In the following year, the Great Cultural Revolution broke out and it turned the global view of the country upside down. As the students, workers, peasants and soldiers of the country were more than successfully mobilized by Mao to take part in the revolution the whole country seemed to be shouting "To rebel is justified" (Chen 1981). In terms of foreign language education, the radical ideologues denounced the slogan of learning from foreign countries and condemned anything foreign as counter-revolutionary. For the first few years foreign books, journals, newspapers, radio stations, and films were taken as the forbidden zone; "worshipping things foreign" and "having illicit relations with a foreign country" were common 'caps' put on heads of foreign language educators (Fu 1986, p. 84). Nevertheless, foreign languages reappeared in most school classrooms when the great majority of schools reopened after two years of disruption and when universities restarted functioning after about four years. For this resumption, the *Shuangyong* policy seemed to be the deciding factor as no one would

make bold to directly challenge the aphorism developed by the paramount leader. Zhou Enlai, the former premier and leader of the party's moderate faction, made tremendous efforts in minimizing the damage done to foreign language education (cf. Ibid.). A case reported in Li et al. (1988) could well represent such efforts made in preventing foreign language courses from disappearing in these years. When some people at a secondary school suggested cutting off the English language course due to lack of motivation from both the students and teachers, the school authority replied, "He who cuts the course off has to take the full consequences" (p. 354). It was the efforts made by the party's moderate faction armed with the *Shuangyong* policy that enabled foreign language education to continue in China during the Cultural Revolution.

Under the chaotic circumstances, of course, the learning of a foreign language could hardly be foreign language learning in its proper sense but a kind of symbolic learning of political slogans, quotations of Mao Zedong and 'Western culture free' articles selected entirely from Chinese periodicals such as *Beijing Review* and *China Reconstructs* (see Dong 1986). Many students were taught to shout in a foreign language slogans such as "Long live Chairman Mao!", "Down with American imperialism!", "We must be both red and expert!" and "Never forget classes and class struggle!" before they might have a chance to learn the alphabet of the language. The teaching curriculum violated the basis principles of foreign language education (ibid.). If a text concerning a Western country was selected for use in an English language course it would be one that revealed the negative side of the country in question. Genuine text materials of the target culture were said to contain "feudal, capitalist and revisionist" poisons (Fu 1986, p. 85). During the Cultural Revolution, the ideological components of all foreign language courses were the ultimate concern for textbook writers.

During Deng's era, the "four modernisations[7]" rubric and "reform and open-door" policy were the main themes for all fronts. Under these themes, the slogan of "Education should be geared in the direction of modernization, and of the world and of the future" (an inscription for the Beijing Jinshan School by Deng Xiaoping in 1983), later abbreviated as the three directions (*Sange mianxiang*), was interpreted as an important part of

Deng's overall 'open-door' policy and his development of Mao's education policies in the new historical era (Zhang et al. 1993). *Sange mianxiang* was apparently a bolder or more liberal slogan than the *Shuangyong* policy in its attempt to make use of foreign expertise (*Yangwei zhongyong*). The first direction, modernization of education, suggests that the ultimate objective of education is to achieve the country's holy goal of "four modernizations". The second direction clearly addresses the needs to absorb foreign expertise while the third is forward looking, but an abstract slogan which leaves plenty of room for interpretation.

The impact of *Sange mianxiang* could be seen at all levels of the education system but the most important changes seemed to have taken place in the higher education sector. The ever increasing communications between China and the outside world significantly stimulated foreign language education (particularly English teaching). There exist many insightful analyses of the higher education sector in the post-Mao decade by both Chinese and western scholars (for examples, Hayhoe 1996, Hayhoe 1989, Lewin et al. 1994, Mao and Sheng 1988 and Rai 1991). All these scholars agree that this period saw a firm swing of the education pendulum from the revolutionary model dominant in the Cultural Revolution to the academic direction.

In higher education, first of all, there was a drastic increase in the total number of tertiary institutions and in undergraduate and postgraduate enrollment. As Table 1 below shows,

Table 1 — Number of tertiary institutions and student enrollment, 1949-89

Types of institutions and enrollment	1949	1978	1985	1987	1989
Regular institutions of higher education	205	598	1,016	1,063	1,075
Undergraduates	117,000	856,000	1,703,000	1,959,000	2,082,000
Postgraduates	600	10,934	87,331	121,191	91,001

Source: State Education Commission (1989)

the number of tertiary institutions grew from less than 600 in 1978 to 1,075 in 1989. While undergraduate enrolment was more than doubled postgraduate intake increased by twelve times in 1987 compared with that ten years ago, though it dropped considerably from 1987 to 1989 owing to a decree stipulating that master degree holders should work for a minimum of five years in the country before seeking opportunities to study abroad (Lewin et al. 1994). The rapid expansion of higher education resulted in a dramatic increase in the percentage of secondary school leavers to enter tertiary institutions, from less than 6% in 1978 to nearly 28% in 1991 (Lewin et al. 1994, p. 117), and this had an academically-stimulating effect on secondary schooling. In addition to the remarkable development of the formal sector of higher education, adult education institutions such as open universities, radio and television universities, and evening colleges also grew rapidly, especially during the first half of the 1980s (ibid.). These institutions provided a significant avenue of educational opportunities for adults of all walks of life.

Perhaps the most stimulating factor for the fervor of learning foreign languages, predominantly English, was the ever-increasing opportunities to go abroad for further studies, research or other purposes and to communicate directly with people from the outside world, primarily Western countries. The practice of 'inviting-in and sending-out' approach was considered the key part of the "open door" policy made for the purpose of modernizing the country's science and technology and its education system. Table 2 below shows official statistics of the number of Chinese students sent by the government to various countries for further studies and the number of foreign students admitted into Chinese universities during the post-Mao reform decade. In stark contrast to the long, self-imposed isolation f m the Western countries in the Mao era, the number of students sent abroad increased sharply year by year and it reached a historical apex in mid-1980s; nearly five thousand students were dispatched by the government in 1985. Of the total number of students sent abroad, nearly 60 % went to English speaking countries such as the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom (Huang 1987). The actual number of students sent or allowed to English speaking countries was much larger as the majority of 'self-sponsored' students went to these countries rather than to other non-English speaking countries (Hayhoe 1987). In addition, a significant number of professionals and

Table 2 — The number of students sent by the government to study abroad and the number of foreign students studying in China

Year	Number of students dispatched abroad	Number of foreign students admitted into Chinese Us.
1978	860	432
1979	1777	440
1980	2124	576
1981	2922	744
1982	2326	865
1983	2633	1038
1984	3073	1293
1985	4885	1585
1986	4676	2009
1987	4703	2044
1988	3786	1854
1989	3329	1393
Total	37,094	14,273

*Source: *The Chinese Educational Statistics Yearbook*, 1989

teachers, primarily at the tertiary level were also involved in this national campaign of 'going abroad'. Various government departments including the Ministry of Education and prestigious universities sent away these scholars and professionals in various areas, academically or geographically, to Western countries for exchange programs, further studies or other purposes. At the same time, more than four thousand foreign teachers and technical professionals (this number excludes those for short visits or with contracts of less than one year) were invited into the country from more than fifty countries, again mainly from developed Western countries, to teach in tertiary institutions or help conduct research projects (Shen 1993). The great majority of these people spoke English as their native/second language. In addition to all the above activities, communications between China and the English speaking countries were greatly extended through other kinds of cross-cultural activities such as international conferences, joint projects, and exchange visits between universities (Huang 1987). As distinct from the Cultural Revolution, this reform decade was characterized by a redirection of China's vision outward and the ever-

increasing opportunities for international communications provided, and still provide the most immediate incentive to learners of foreign languages.

The perception that English proficiency could facilitate economic mobility made English extremely popular all over the country, particularly in higher educational institutions. As Feng (1988) analyses, there were three important stimulators behind learners' motivation in learning the English language: 1) their ever-increasing awareness of the importance of the language in trade, science and technology; 2) ever-increasing opportunities to pursue further studies abroad; and 3) one of the essential criteria for promotions of professionals and academics being to pass a foreign language test. It could seen that in Deng's reform decade, people of literally all walks of life made tremendous efforts in learning a foreign language, particularly English. The prime time television show on CCTV, "*Follow Me*", for example, was the longest-running BBC English teaching program of the 1980s, with an estimated audience of over 20,000,000 and a successful spin-off, "*Follow Me to Science*" (Ross 1992). The English language teaching series, "*Follow Me*", did not only teach the language in a way refreshing to millions of Chinese learners but satisfied their curiosity about the British culture. It was commonplace observation that many factory workers and others without higher education were among learners of English. Most of them attended various courses and programs offered by colleges or evening schools and some studied on their own. When asked about their motivation of learning the foreign language, some of them might talk about the potential possibilities for promotion or future development, but many would simply say that as English became so important they wished to learn some basics in order to offer some help to their children. Compared with Russian in the early 1950s, English language attracted a much larger enthusiastic learner population and the courses and programs of English language teaching were offered in a more liberal and comprehensive manner.

In higher education, foreign language courses, particularly English programs, became students' favorite subjects. First of all, it could be seen that specialized foreign language institutions quickly expanded in terms of students enrollment (Fu 1986 and Li et al. 1988 present plenty of comparative statistics). The most noticeable and significant change,

however, was not the increasing number of foreign language majors enrolled into these specialized institutions and FL departments. It took place in all tertiary institutions throughout the country. An English program, widely known as Common English before 1980s and College English since 1985, has developed from "an auxiliary course of hardly any significance" (Dong 1993) to "a decisive course in the process of reforming the Chinese education" (Zhou, director of the Higher Education Division of the State Education Commission, at the Daqing National College English Symposium, 1994). According to Feng's (1988) statistics, this English program was offered every year to nearly one million undergraduate students not majoring in English (see section below for further discussion). The highly motivated students spend a great deal of time on English learning. In addition to formal classroom hours (normally four contact hours per week), they participate in various kinds of English activities and explore all resources available; their favorite activities include reading English aloud early in the morning on university campuses, joining in English corner activities, organizing oral or written competitions, reading English newspapers and magazines, attending talks given by fluent speakers of English, watching English films and videos, and listening to VOA or BBC radio programs. The College English learners do demonstrate very unique enthusiasm and motivation in English language learning.

Although the most notable impact of the reform was made on foreign language teaching in higher education, the reform decade experienced severe challenges on the ideological front. As was discussed above, overall, the ten-year Cultural Revolution could be seen as an overwhelming tragedy in China's modern history and the society ended up close to nihilism. The spiritual pillars built up with "false bricks" inside the young generation over a decade suddenly collapsed with the ending of the revolution (Yang 1991). For some years the students felt bewildered and lost and the early 1980s was commonly known as a period of 'ideological crisis'. With the promulgation of the "open door" policy and the mass fervor of English language learning in the reform decade, Western ideologies, values and thoughts swiftly made their way into the country. Western notions like freedom, democracy and human rights were readily embraced by the students as keys to their ideological puzzles. Consequently, the ideological theories followed faithfully by the

communist party were frequently questioned and challenged by both students and liberal intellectuals. Marxism, the political canon of the party for decades, for example, was denounced by some outspoken liberal intellectuals as obsolete and it was held responsible for China's backwardness. Some of these liberal intellectuals explicitly advocated whole-sale Westernization (Zhang 1996). Yang (1991) also noted that some students compared Marxism unfavorably with the economic theories developed by the British economist, J. M. Keynes (1883-1946). As a result of the exposure to Western ideologies, this decade was also featured with students unrest. The most representative activities included the Democracy Wall Movement in Beijing from 1978 to 1980, 'salon' activities in the early 1980s, a series of students' demonstrations mid-1980s and eventually the Tiananmen Square Event (1989) (cf. Rai 1991). In response to these activities, various campaigns were launched in the 1980s by the Party to fight against "bourgeois liberalization" and "spiritual pollution" (cf. Zhang 1996) while the "Four Cardinal Principles[8]" were again and again emphasized as the principle line of the country. All these campaigns launched and the measures taken by the government after Tiananmen inserted both short-term and long-term effects on the country's politics and education in general (cf. Heyhoe 1996, Zhang 1996 and Rai 1991). The aftereffects of the Tiananmen event on higher education were most apparently reflected by compulsory military training programs for freshmen and in the modification of the contents for social science subjects offered in tertiary institutions (cf. Lewin et al. 1994).

None the less, unlike these social science subjects, a great majority, if not all, of foreign language programs remained intact and the effects on most English language teaching programs were apparently minimal. Even though foreign influences were officially denounced by the government as a factor of the student unrest, there seemed to be no documented attempt, as there were in the early years of the Cultural Revolution, from any ideological faction to question the value of foreign language education or challenge the significance of *Yangwei zhongyong* (making foreign things serve China). Quite on the contrary, at the meeting with some graduating students in Beijing in 1992, Jiang Zemin, General Secretary of the Communist Party, made the following remarks as summarized in Zhang (1993),

> In order to speed up our economic development and to implement our 'reform and open-door' policies, we must learn all the advanced things from foreign, including capitalist countries and make use of them. (p. 256, author's translation)

These remarks clearly served to re-iterate *Yangwei zhongyong*, the second half of the *Shuangyong* policy. In the same year, according to Zhang (ibid.), Deng Xiaoping, the paramount leader, made the reiteration even more concrete and comprehensive. During his inspecting tour to the southern part of China, he proposed to learn from Asia's 'four little dragons' (South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong), their experience of economic development and administration. He particularly mentioned Singapore as the country does not only pay attention to economic advancement but attaches importance to traditional Chinese culture. All the facts and the attitudes shown in the remarks by the top leaders unmistakably indicate that there is a very favorable 'ecological environment' for implementing the *Shuangyong* policy.

Shuangyong in a typical language course

While policy makers realized that foreign language expertise could serve as a channel to modern technology they were equally aware that that it would also become a passageway to "bourgeois liberalization" or cultural conversion. How to enable a learner to master a foreign language without his/her being contaminated by its cultural 'dross' has remained a serious dilemma for policy makers and educationists since 1949, especially since the ending of the Cultural Revolution when Western ideological philosophies started to enter university campuses and students began to re-evaluate Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought (see the ending paragraph of the previous section for an example given by Yang 1991). Is it possible to minimize, if impossible to entirely eliminate, the influence of Western ideologies on learners in the learning process of a foreign language? Could a

policy statement be made in a 'convincing' way so as to guide practitioners and learners in achieving such a goal?

In the Mao era, divergent replies to these questions reflected competing perceptions of a modern socialist country that complicated the practice of foreign language education. During the last two decades, policy makers and educational ideologues have turned more and more towards a comprehensive interpretation of the *Shuangyong* policy. This is most evidently manifested in some "quasi-official documents", a term coined in this paper to refer to commercial publications authored by or bearing names of senior government officials. Having as consultants Li Tieying, former Minister of Education and Zhang Chenxian, President of the Chinese Education Association, Zhang (1993) states the importance of this policy,

> In this "reform and open-door" era, whether or not we can effectively implement the *Shuangyong* policy determines the nature and speed of constructing our country's material and spiritual civilizations. This strategically important policy should be highly valued, particularly in the cultural and educational domains (p. 249, author's translation).

In specific terms, Zhang asserts that the policy should be thoroughly implemented in the areas of philosophy, social sciences and various natural science subjects. Having stressed the importance of "Making foreign things serve China" (*Yangwei zhongyong*) and called for enhancing international communications, he goes further to discuss the implications of "Making the ancient serve the present" (*Guwei jinyong*) and suggests the study of classics such as the *Analects* (*Lungyu*) and other classical literature. All in all, Zhang emphasizes the significance of *Shuangyong* as a policy in contemporary China and suggests practical measures for comprehensively implementing it.

In interpreting one of Deng's *Sange mianxiang* (the Three Directions), Teng and Zhang (1992), also under the consultancy of such senior political names in the central government as Lu Zhengcao, Wu Xiuquan and Yuan Baohua, list five qualities and characteristics a qualified foreign language 'talent' should possess: 1) strong linguistic competence; 2) a commendable understanding of the culture of the target language (note

that they are aware of the necessity of cultural studies in foreign language education); 3) strong capability in communicating with the speakers of the target language; 4) capability in strictly safeguarding state secrets and complying with state policies and a good understanding of international laws, regulations and courtesies; and, most importantly 5) a correct "reform and open-door" attitude, which, in their interpretation, is the *Yangwei zhongyong* (making foreign things serve China) attitude. Of these qualities, the first three address the universally-accepted needs of linguistic and communicative competence while the last two suggest ideological requirements for foreign language graduates. *Shuangyong* policy, thus, becomes a criterion in assessing whether a graduate with foreign language expertise is a 'talent' the country wants.

From a holistic point of view, foreign language education seems to have struck a balance in the last two decades in terms of academic and ideological dimensions. Though the holy goal of training 'red experts' (a term coined in the Mao era to refer to professionals and academics with strong political consciousness) has remained fundamentally unchanged in this period (Zhang et al. 1992), the education pendulum has swung firmly to the direction of academic development. Foreign language education, particularly English teaching, has enjoyed great growth since 1977, as was shown before. But how does ideology reveal itself in a foreign language program since the holy goal of training 'red-experts' has remained unchanged? What role does *Shuangyong* play in a language course?

In order to find answers to these questions, one has to take a closer look at a typical language program. The most representative and influential foreign language course is without doubt College English which, as was introduced before, refers to the English program offered to all undergraduates not majoring English in tertiary institutions throughout the country. This English program used to be called Common English and Service English until 1985 when the *College English Syllabus*[9] was promulgated by the then State Education Commission. The introduction of the two nationally unified tests, CET 4 and CET 6 in 1987, gave the program a tremendous boost. In the past decade, most educationists and administrators in tertiary institutions have reacted very actively to the nation-wide tests as the student passing rate of a particular institution in these tests

would have significant effects on it (cf. Feng 1988 and Han et al. 1995). The students are also fully mobilized because the certificates of the tests are recognized by their future employers and academic supervisors. It is generally believed that both the syllabus and the tests have brought about fundamental changes to the teaching of English in China.

In the Mao era, ideological orientation was always stipulated as the primary concern for the program. Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought were clearly specified in all syllabuses and documents concerning this program as the guiding principles for it. Even in the 1980 *Service English Syllabus*, these political philosophies were still claimed as the ideological basis for all teaching constituents (Li et al. 1988). Up till then, politics was in supreme command for this program as well as for most other subjects taught at the university. From then on, however, the "open-door" policy seemed to gradually make policy makers and foreign language educators put less and less emphasis on ideological orientation. This 'lessening' sense of ideological consciousness became apparent in the two College English syllabuses issued in 1985 and 1986 respectively. In neither of these two syllabuses can one find explicit specifications for ideological orientation for course instruction and materials writing. The contents of syllabuses resonate to a certain extent the 'reform and open-door' environment in the post-Mao era in China.

However lessening the ideological sense of College English educators seemed to be, *Shuangyong* was not neglected, neither in the document nor in College English materials development. In the syllabuses the policy manifests itself in a new phrase which concerns the choice of teaching methodology. In order to develop a methodology germane to the Chinese context, the syllabuses use a phrase '*Bocai zhongchang*', meaning 'to adapt strengths of various teaching approaches to our own applications'. By the interpretation of Dong (1986), general editor of *College English*[10], the phrase *Bocai zhongchang* suggests "diachronic inheritance, synchronic exchange in determining our teaching methodology" and thus, "trying to cherish the outmoded approaches or copying Western models indiscriminately" is to be rejected (p. 23). Many other big-named College English specialists, such as Li (1995) and Han et al. (1995), have also made similar remarks to this.

The inference of 'diachronic inheritance' is clear to Chinese foreign language educators. In terms of teaching methodology, there seems to be no other model but the traditional intensive reading approach that is meant to be 'inherited'. The term intensive reading per se needs to be defined as it is somewhat misleading. An intensive reading course in China is quite different from an intensive course in its usual sense. While an intensive course is often relatively short with emphasis laid on language reinforcement and high frequency of lessons, a typical intensive reading course in a Chinese university is usually offered four contact hours per week and it could last for years. The most notable difference is not the time spent, of course, but the way 'intensive reading' is carried out in a classroom. An intensive reading lesson is heavily grammar-vocabulary based and highly teacher-centred. In such a lesson, the teacher goes over the text with his students word by word, sentence by sentence and grammatical point by grammatical point. The students in this course are not actual readers but passive listeners because the focus of teacher-centred activities put learners into a passive role of listening and memorizing, and language as communication is largely neglected (Cotton 1990). Because of this, the teaching approach has been the target of criticism from foreign language educators for years. Yet, intensive reading has been regarded by many as the backbone of foreign language courses. Li (1995) argues that the intensive reading course does work in the Chinese context today as well as in the past as foreign language talents in China have been taught through this approach. Despite its weaknesses, such as teacher-centredness and passive learning on the part of the students, some maintain that intensive reading develops in students basic language skills, sound knowledge of the target language, correct methods of study and eventually it enables learners to study and work independently. Therefore, it will continue to be an essential course in English language teaching in China (cf. Wu 1990). Nowadays, in many tertiary institutions, the intensive reading course has been renamed (rectified in Li's (1995) words) "comprehensive skills course". This could be seen as an attempt to integrate the approach with current models (a kind of "Synchronic exchange" in Dong's terms) and to develop it into a teaching approach with 'Chinese characteristics'.

In spite of the change of the course title, some essential features of the intensive reading approach, particularly teacher-centredness, are still there in many classrooms. This could be well illustrated by a recent survey conducted by Zheng, Wei and Chen (1997). Table 3 below shows that nearly 70 % of the College English teachers surveyed self-estimated that they use up more than 60% of their class time explaining grammar and words. Zheng, Wei and Chen replicated the survey among 3,224 CE students, but asking them

Table 3 — Teachers' estimates of the average time they spend in classrooms explaining words, sentences and grammar (sample size: 351 CE teachers)

Time spent on explaining words and grammar in percentage	Number of responses	%
(No response)	25	7.1%
20-40%	13	3.7%
41-60%	74	21.1%
61-80%	160	45.6%
81% and above	79	22.5%

Source: Zheng, Wei and Chen (1997)

to estimate how much time their teachers spend explaining sentences and words in class. They found that the students responded in a very similar manner. They sensibly argued that subjective estimation like this may not reveal the situation in a precise manner, however, such data can show a "thick-line situation of classroom teaching" (p. 24).

It could be seen that *Bocai zhongchang* (adapting the strengths of various approaches of teaching to Chinese context) is the actual application of *Yangwei zhongyong* (making foreign things serve China) to teaching methodology development. On the one hand, this stipulation gives methodologists some freedom to study and develop effective teaching methods. On the other hand, it provides 'traditionalists' with a 'fortress' to safeguard the conventional approaches which may not be efficient in terms of teaching outcome. The very fact revealed in Zheng, Wei and Chen's survey clearly suggests that in the case of College English, 'traditionalists' prevail for the reason that as the course is intimately tied to the national system of examinations teachers tend to be on the traditionally 'safe' side.

There is always a risk, pedagogical, methodological or political, of trying or developing something new.

Teaching methodology is certainly a crucial part of foreign language education, but what is more important is the contents for teaching, i.e. the textbook materials, particularly in terms of ideological orientation the *Shuangyong* policy suggests. A close examination of some widely-used College English textbook series reveals that textbook writers never ignore the ideological dimension in material development even though this dimension is 'missing' from the syllabus. In the "Preface to the First Edition" of *New English Course*, edited by Liu et al. (1994), the ideological orientation is listed as a criterion together with two other text-selection criteria[11] stipulated in the syllabus. Their stated aim for adopting this criterion is to widen learners' horizon but the way to apply it is not elaborated. In the same manner, Dong (1986), chief editor of *College English*, states that, in addition to such common criteria as to make a text interesting, enlightening and informative, its ideological dimension is taken care of in text-selection for her textbook series. However, her interpretation for *ideological concern* (*Sixiang xing*) in material development is noticeably different from traditional ones. She contends that the ideological content in a textbook should not be "empty preaching"; instead, it should be integrated with the other criteria, i.e. the texts chosen should also be interesting and informative, so as to achieve the purpose of educating the young. She presents two examples to illustrate how the integration could be achieved: the two stories chosen for Unit 10 of Book II and the three articles for the last unit of *Extensive Reading*, Book II. Ironically, the first example is used by Zhai (1986), editor of *Intensive Reading* booklets in Dong's own series, to exemplify the principle of enlightening or provoking thinking (*Ke si xing*) rather than ideological concern (*Sixiang xing*). All in all, the ideological components the editors of these two College English textbook series have in mind may not equate Marxist-Leninist-Maoist politics and philosophies, which were the norm of materials writing before the Deng era. However, the ideological dimension is definitely taken into full consideration by all textbook writers in materials production, aiming to educate people while imparting knowledge (*Jiaoshu Yuren*).

How does the ideological dimension manifest itself in a typical College English textbook series? In examining the contents of the *Intensive Reading* booklets in Dong's *College English*[12] series one may notice that the editors did select a great variety of materials from genuine British or American sources. The texts include essays on social values, lifestyles, education, history, science and technology and many sensational or interesting fiction stories embodying various cultural dimensions of mainly British and American societies. The editors did intend to touch upon as many cultural aspects of these two countries as they could and this is clearly indicated by Dong (1992) when she claims that in selecting cultural background information the editors attempted to strike a balance of a variety of topics (cultural representation at the macro-social level[13] in Byram and Esarte-Sarries's (1991) terms). She admits that because of the lack of clear criteria the text materials are quite unbalanced as some topics are extensively covered while some others are rarely touched upon. However, she did not elaborate in what way the materials are unbalanced.

A careful look at the contents of the first four *Intensive Reading* booklets[14] reveals that there are quite a few unbalanced aspects which can in fact manifest the ideological concern of the editors in materials development. First and foremost, the very criterion of *Sixiang xing* self-imposed in textbook writing makes difficult the cultural representation at the micro-social level[15] (Byram and Esarte-Sarries, 1991). In order to achieve the right *Sixiang xing* the texts selected should be socio-politically acceptable and the embodied values and morals should strike a sympathetic chord in Chinese learners of English. For example, the chosen texts would include more texts on those values, such as self-esteem, patriotism, bravery, interpersonal relationship and attitudes towards work, which may be shared by Chinese readers, but less on those values, such as privacy and individualism, which show cultural differences. There does not seem to be much importance attached to a comparative perspective, however important it is in foreign language textbook writing. Secondly, the editors apparently selected more texts which depict the negative side than those about the positive side of the British and American societies (see the last paragraph of this section for more discussion). Though it is difficult to put it statistically, one may

find many stories and articles representing social problems such as crimes, racism, social stratification, sexism, and the city poor, but the number of texts representing positive images of the two countries, though exist, is not as large. Thirdly, according to the limited sources given in the *Intensive Reading* booklets most texts come directly from EFL textbooks that were written by English native speakers but published in the 1960s and 1970s. The lack of contemporaneity of textbook materials makes out-dated the socio-cultural and socio-economic dimensions of the target cultures. Fourthly, the editors failed or deliberately avoided selecting texts from those resources which students often explore but could be classified as sensitive from an ideological viewpoint. The listening materials of most College English series, for example, contain very few genuine texts from VOA (Voice of America) and BBC radio programs although they are in fact extremely popular among CE students in China[16]. Despite its significance in maintaining and increasing learner motivation, the natural language learning behavior of CE students is not taken into full consideration.

And last but not the least, the intercultural representation is largely overlooked in text selection. Throughout the four *Intensive Reading* booklets of *College English* there exists no evidence of entertaining this need. The neglect of inter-cultural representations can be best illustrated by the following example. An unadapted text selected from the *Time* magazine which depicts how Chongqing, one of the largest cities in China, is seen by an American reporter was chosen for Book 2 in the first edition of the *New English Course* published in 1986 but was missing from its second edition printed in 1992. The exclusion of such texts surely has much to do with textbook writers' lack of enthusiasm in adopting this type of texts[17] or their misconception of inter-cultural representations. The dismal consequence of this lack of interest could be exemplified by the commonplace observation that many students may know Shakespeare and some of his works but have no idea who Confucius was as the name in Chinese sounds quite differently. Likewise, many students might have learned such words as "bacon, toast and corn flakes" but may not have the vocabulary like "steamed bread, congee and salted vegetables" to describe a typical student breakfast offered in a Chinese university canteen. This will no doubt put students at a very unfavorable position in cross-cultural interactions.

The ideological concern is not only evident in textbooks but also in classroom teaching. Huang (1994), for example, gives an account of his personal experience of 'educating the students' in teaching the reading course of *New English Course*. One of the examples in his account details his way of handling in class articles such as "Patients needed", "The interview" and "Letter from New York" which, in his words, disclose various social evils of Western capitalist systems from different angles. He reports that through his teaching of the articles, his students "obtained an in-depth understanding of the decadent nature of capitalist societies and of the superiority of socialism. Their love of socialist motherland was further distilled." (p. 12, author's translation). He concludes that in foreign language teaching, ideological education is not only necessary but also practicable.

Concluding remarks

Quasi-official documents indicate a strong resurgence of the *Shuangyong* policy as a guiding doctrine in education, as other ideologically-oriented aphorisms or dualisms in education have turned out either too political or too hypothetical to maintain their appeals. *Shuangyong* has indeed gone far beyond the normal jurisdiction of a policy by Chinese definition. As was shown above, it could be taken as a norm, an attitude as well as a policy in different circumstances. As an educational creed it effectively safeguards the traditional culture in China's search for national identity and provides a strong thread of continuity in foreign language education, especially in times of political turmoil such as the Cultural Revolution. As a deeply-embedded cultural concept it ensures ideological solicitude in many, if not all foreign language educators — teachers and textbook writers alike — in materials writing and classroom teaching. Sufficient evidence shows that the ideological dimension has never been overlooked by teachers and textbook writers no matter whether it is specified in the national syllabus or not. Educators' unfailing consciousness of this dimension could be

well illustrated in the case of College English, particularly in its textbooks used all over the country in recent years. Furthermore, *Yangwei zhongyong* (making foreign things serve China) is listed as a required attitude, one of the personal attributes a talent of the country should possess (cf. Teng and Zhang 1992). When this attitude is vigorously promoted in present-day China, it would enhance the implementation of the policy in effectively serving its purpose of treating a foreign language as a functional tool and preventing it from becoming a potential pathway to individual and cultural transformation.

A very representative *Yangwei zhongyong* attitude is perhaps shown in the Preamble of Huang's (1997) book on English language education. On the one hand, he states that foreign language education could widen the learner's horizon for it does not only have its practical (economic) value but also its cognitive and aesthetic significance. In the same text, however, he makes the following remarks,

> The aim of our large-scaled English language education in this open door era is to take stones from others' hills in order to build our motherland into an original country of civilization for the new generations. Hopefully, our future generations will not have to spend so much time on foreign language learning as we do now so that they can devote themselves to activities more creative. (p. 2, author's translation)

Huang seems to make two points: 1) when the needed "stones" are taken from other "hills" the significance of these "hills" no longer exists because the utilitarian value of the "hills" has disappeared; and 2) foreign language learning is not a very creative activity, if it is creative at all. The second point will not be discussed here as it is not directly relevant to the interest of this paper. It is the first that the author wishes to make a few remarks on. The statement maker has apparently forgotten the people on these "hills" and the infinite necessity of communications with people all over the world. Clearly, this statement fail to address the supreme goal of foreign language education.

Fu (1986), an important official responsible for foreign language education in the then State Education Commission, airs his view on a foreign language and foreign language teaching as he comments on the missionary schools run by some Western countries after the Opium War in China:

> The aims and policies pursued and measures taken by Western imperialist countries in running their schools should be thoroughly criticized. Their attempts to use foreign languages as tools of enslaving education should also be ferreted out to the fullest extent. But a (foreign) language is a tool, and a weapon. It does not itself possess a class character; the enemies could use it to achieve their purposes yet we can apply it to our own revolutionary and construction causes. As for the enemies' library materials, reference books, teaching methodology and experience (such as the 'Direct Method' and creating a foreign language environment in foreign language teaching), if we throw off the contents which are counter-revolutionary, religious and idealistic, and discard those against educational science and principles, we can still make use of them by integrating these materials and experience into our practice and by injecting into them revolutionary and scientific contents. (p. 44, author's translation)

This assertion shows a policy maker's concern about the ideological dimensions in foreign language education and his clear position against indiscriminate copying of foreign teaching methodology. On the other hand, his remarks seem to suggest the separation of a foreign language from its socio-political contexts during the teaching process in modern China. When this separation takes place, however, the teaching of a foreign language could hardly be said to be foreign language teaching in its proper sense but the teaching of a codified version of the country's own socio-political culture.

Byram (1989) points out that "foreign language teaching is, both in my experience as learner and teacher and in my pedagogic philosophy, as education, an emancipation from the confines of one's own habitat and culture; the current emphasis on language teaching as skill training is apt to lose that from sight." (p. vii) It is absolutely true that the reform in foreign language education has been vigorous during the 'open door' era in China. None the less, it seems clear that it will be a daunting task for foreign language teachers and students to engage in cultural studies in a more comprehensive and systematic manner if cross-cultural knowledge and foreign influences are not perceived as mutual enrichments but a means of or a potential pathway towards ideological conversion, or, in more constructive words, if the policy is not further developed.

Notes

1. Confucianism - the philosophical system founded on the teaching of Confucius (551-479 BC). Confucianism combines a political theory and a theory of human nature to yield a "Dao" — a prescriptive doctrine or way. The doctrine supported political authority using the theory of the mandate of heaven and sought to help the rulers who derived authority from heaven's command to maintain order and preserve tradition. It also trained its adherents in benevolence, traditional rituals, filial piety, loyalty, respects for superiors and for the aged and so forth. Confucianism dominated Chinese education system and her socio-political life for most of Chinese history

2. The Self-Strengthening Movement took place from early 1860s to late 1890s. Believing that new thoughts and Western techniques were needed to strengthen the country, in this movement, the Self-Strengtheners in the Qing government set up factories to manufacture firearms and machines and promoted technical schools and Western expertise for the purpose of maintaining the feudal rule in the country.

3. The Civil Service Examination System was founded by the Han dynasty in the second century B. C. and it survived till 1905. The system was used to test candidates for civil service positions and the examination put primary emphasis on knowledge of Confucian classics.

4 *Badesiwei* — loyalty, filial piety, benevolence, love, faith, righteousness, harmony and fairness (the Eight Morals (*Bade*)); rites, righteousness, honesty and a good sense of shame, (the Four Thoughts (*Siwei*))

5 *Sanmin Zhuyi* — Nationalism, People's Rights and the People's Livelihood

6. Cai Yuanpei (1869-1940) is widely known as a celebrated forerunner of modern education in China. He was the first minister of education in the Republican era and later became the president of the prestigious Peking University.

7. The "Four Modernizations" — Modernization of industries, modernization of agriculture, modernization of national defence and modernization of science and technology

8. The "Four Cardinal Principles" — Upholding Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, Party leadership, socialism and the proletarian dictatorship. These principles came into existence after a speech by Deng Xiaoping in 1979.

9. Both syllabuses are for the same program (College English) and are similar in contents with the 1985 syllabus claiming to apply to undergraduates of science and engineering and the 1986 version applicable to undergraduates of humanities and science (see Feng 1997 for further detail).

10. Readers are cordially reminded that College English, the English program, should NOT be mixed up in this paper with *College English*, one of the textbooks most widely used for this program in tertiary institutions throughout the country.

11. In *College English Syllabus* (1985), it is stipulated that texts selected for College English textbooks should be interesting, informative and enlightening. These are called the three basic principles in text selection.

12. *College English*, edited by Dong et al., is believed to be the most widely used textbook series and claimed to have users (undergraduate students) in more than 800 tertiary institutions in China. For this reason, this series is usually the focus of discussion by textbook analyzers.

13. Byram, M. S. and Esarte-Sarries, V. consider three dimensions in analyzing a text the cultural contents of a textbook. At the macro-social level they look at broad social facts such as geographical, economic, political dimensions of societal life.

14. As the first four band courses are the core courses of the foundation stage (cf. *College English Syllabus*, 1985), the four corresponding intensive reading booklets are always the focus of attention for both textbook writers and textbook analyzers.

15. At the micro-social level Byram, M. S. and Esarte-Sarries, V. look at how the social identity of individuals, their social environment and their personality, etc. are represented in a textbook.

16. The popularity of VOA (Voice of America) and BBC (British Broadcast Corporation) among students is commonplace observation. For a representative account, please see Yan, Jingnan's survey (1994) among a number of English majors in her university in "American craze" and American Culture. When asked why listening textbooks do not include a larger number of VOA and BBC programs, a textbook writer replied during an interview, "How can we? Obviously, the contents of many are not suitable for our students. They (VOA and BBC) often talk about human rights and democracy."

17. The author conducted quite a few interviews in this couple of years with about five College English textbook writers. Among the five, only one would consider using texts on Chinese cultural aspects in his textbook on the premises that they are written by native speakers of English. The main reason given by the other four for not using this type of texts is that they **feel** learners would not be interested in reading them.

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